

From: [Roby, Daniel](#)
To: [Somers, Elaine](#)
Subject: Re: From Greenwire -- EPA: Scientific integrity complaints soared in 2014
Date: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 8:08:35 AM
Attachments: [~WRD000.jpg](#)
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Hmmmmm, good question. It seems like that would have been something Jane Lubchenco would have pushed for when she was director.

From: , Elaine <somers.elaine@epa.gov>
Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2015 6:15 PM
To: [REDACTED] (b) (6)
Subject: FW: From Greenwire -- EPA: Scientific integrity complaints soared in 2014

I wonder if NOAA has a similar science integrity official?

From: somers.elaine@epa.gov by E&E Publishing [mailto:email_this@eenews.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 6:14 PM
To: Somers, Elaine
Subject: From Greenwire -- EPA: Scientific integrity complaints soared in 2014

This Greenwire story was sent to you by: somers.elaine@epa.gov



AN E&E PUBLISHING SERVICE

EPA: **Scientific integrity complaints soared in 2014**

Robin Bravender, E&E reporter

Published: Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Scientific integrity complaints skyrocketed at U.S. EPA last year.

The agency received 40 complaints about its scientific integrity last year, up from two in 2013 and one in 2012, according to a new [report](#) from EPA's scientific integrity officials.

Those allegations are wide-ranging, according to the annual report. They include 13 allegations of suppression or delay, nine involving peer review and five related to disputes over authorship -- including plagiarism allegations. Of the 40 allegations made last year, 17 were made formally and 23 were made informally.

Of the 17 formal allegations, according to the report, three are closed, three are under investigation by the inspector general's office, one is being resolved in a regional office, and 10 are still in an "inquiry" phase.

The tally of complaints began after EPA issued its scientific integrity policy in 2012, which aims to be a framework for promoting scientific and ethical standards within the agency.

The report said the boost in allegations is "probably not as notable as it might seem," because the rise in complaints coincides with the arrival of EPA's first full-time scientific integrity official and with "significant increases in outreach about the policy."

Francesca Grifo, former senior scientist and director of the Union of Concerned Scientists' scientific integrity program, started as EPA's scientific integrity official in late 2013.

"As the annual reports illustrates, we did report allegations of lapses in scientific integrity that came to our attention," Grifo wrote yesterday in a blog [post](#). "While I am happy to report that this represented less than 0.3% of EPA employees, we take each and every one seriously."

Grifo added that the "small percentage" of complaints received "shows that we have a clear and effective process for reporting allegations. It also shows that we have the processes in place to resolve concerns in a transparent yet confidential manner and allow for resolution in a fair and consistent fashion. In short -- we take the reported allegations seriously but they in sum are not so serious as to undermine the work we do."

And while EPA needs to "remain vigilant," Grifo said, "our Scientific Integrity Annual Report shows real progress, and I believe we are now poised to have the procedures and processes in place we need."

The report also warned that staff reductions at the agency could affect scientific integrity.

"The agency has recently gone through a reduction in the size of its scientific staff," the report says. "While challenging, this in and of itself, is not a scientific integrity issue; however, if such reductions lead to changes in process or practice that make scientific conclusions more vulnerable to a loss of scientific integrity, then this could become an issue of concern" to the scientific integrity official.

EPA's workforce has recently dipped below 15,000 employees, the lowest level the agency has seen since the George H.W. Bush administration

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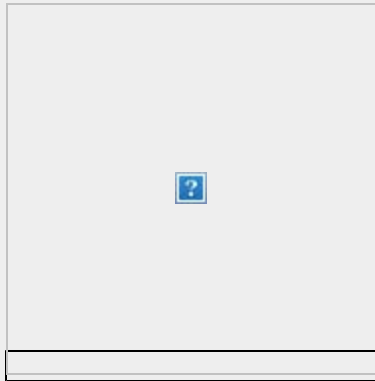
([***E&ENews PM***](#), March 2).

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